

## ARKANSAS PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

2nd Revised	Sheet No. 14.4
1st Revised	Sheet No. 14.4
Madison County Telephone Company, Inc. Company Name	
Kind of Service Telecommunications	Class of Service: All
Part III. Rate Schedule No. 1	
Title: LOCAL SERVICE	

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## (CT) 1.3 LIFELINE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (continued)

## 1.3.5 Certification

## 1.3.5.1 General

## 1.3.5.1.1

Applicants for lifeline must meet the eligibility guidelines. A certification process shall be used to ensure only eligible applicants receive lifeline service. Each applicant must certify that they are receiving support for only one line per household.

## 1.3.5.2 Certification of eligibility through low income qualification.

## 1.3.5.2.1

This ETC participates in the ALIVE Board program established by the Arkansas General Assembly in 2005 through Act 2289 of 2005 to provide a governmentally maintained income qualification certification process that includes self-certification by applicants, under penalty of perjury, that the documentation presented by the applicant accurately represents their annual household income and provides the number of individuals in the household. Per F.C.C. order, each subscriber must provide certain certifications when enrolling in the Lifeline Program. New Lifeline subscribers must provide documentation of program-based eligibility, which the Telephone Company enrolling the subscriber should review, but not retain. Should the subscriber attempt to certify based on income, the Telephone Company shall be provided supporting documentation in order to complete the certification. The certifying document shall also include the requirement that the consumer will notify this ETC if the consumer's income exceeds 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The ALIVE Board program shall provide this ETC with a copy of the above referenced procedures. This ETC shall review the procedures to ensure the procedures are appropriate to certify and document income.

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(CT) 1.3 LIFELINE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (continued)

## 1.3.5.2.2

This ETC shall monitor the ALIVE Board to ensure the ALIVE Board establishes appropriate procedures and provides this ETC with a copy of such procedures. This ETC shall review the procedures to ensure the procedures are appropriate to certify and document income based eligibility for lifeline enrollment. An officer of this ETC shall monitor the ALIVE Board certification process and procedures and shall certify at time of enrollment, under penalty of perjury, to the best of the officer's knowledge, that this ETC has procedures in place to review documentation via the ALIVE Board, and that the ETC, via the ALIVE Board, was presented with documentation that confirms the consumer's household eligibility, in that the consumer's household income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

## 1.3.5.3 Certification of eligibility through participation in governmental programs

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## (CT) 1.3 LIFELINE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (continued)

## 1.3.5.3.1

The applicant's eligibility for lifeline service due to participation in governmental programs shall be certified by the applicant in coordination with the governmental entity providing, monitoring, or reviewing program participation. For instance, many programs may be provided by the Department of Human Services, Department of Health, and local school districts. This ETC, through the ALIVE board or the third-party, will coordinate with the applicant and the appropriate governmental entity to ensure proper certification. This ETC shall require the third-party to establish appropriate procedures that include self-certification by applicants, under penalty of perjury, that the applicant receives benefits from the eligibility programs and identify the program or programs from which the applicant receives benefits. The certifying document shall also include the requirement that the consumer will notify this ETC if the consumer ceases to participate in the program or programs.

## 1.3.6 CONSUMER COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

## 1.3.6.1 General

## 1.3.6.1.1

The Federal Lifeline Program requires a consumer complaint resolution process. The Arkansas Public Service Commission has determined in Order No. 1 of Docket No. 05-038-U that any ETC, which maintains tariffs and is subject to the Public Service Commission's consumer complaint procedures, meet the dispute resolution requirements for Lifeline. This ETC is subject to the Public Service Commission's consumer complaint procedures and shall use the Public Service Commission's consumer complaint procedures to meet the dispute resolution requirements for Lifeline.



## ARKANSAS PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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Sheet No. 14.7

1st Revised

Sheet No. 14.7

Madison County Telephone Company, Inc.

Company Name

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## (CT) 1.3 LIFELINE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (continued)

## 1.3.7 VERIFICATION OF CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY

## 1.3.7.1 General

## 1.3.7.1.1

The Lifeline program requires this ETC to annually monitor the continued eligibility of Lifeline participants by requiring each Lifeline subscriber, both existing subscribers and new subscribers, to provide annual self-certifications attesting to their continued eligibility of the program. During the re-certification process for year 2012, the Telephone Company shall re-certify all of their subscribers claimed on their June FCC Form 497 and report the results of this annual re-certification process to the Commission, USAC, and the Arkansas State Commission by the end of 2012. Beginning in 2013, this Telephone Company will annually choose to either, where ETCs cannot re-certify their subscribers by accessing a database, to re-certify their Lifeline customers on a annual basis or elect to have USAC re-certify them. Also, should the Telephone Company choose to use a state of federal program database to confirm a consumers ongoing eligibility for Lifeline, the annual re-certification will not be implemented.

## 1.3.7.2 (Reserved for future use).

1.3.7.2.1 (Reserved for future use)

1.3.7.2.2 (Reserved for future use)

## ARKANSAS PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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<u>Madison County Telephone Company, Inc.</u> Company Name	
Kind of Service <u>Telecommunications</u>	Class of Service: <u>All</u>
Part III Rate Schedule No. <u>1</u>	
Title: <b>LOCAL SERVICE</b>	

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## (CT) 1.3 LIFELINE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (continued)

## 1.3.8 PROCESS FOR TERMINATION OF LIFELINE BENEFITS

## 1.3.8.1 General

## 1.3.8.1.1

A consumer's eligibility for Lifeline may be terminated due to failure to maintain qualifications for Lifeline. This ETC shall follow the required process for termination of Lifeline benefits.

## 1.3.8.2 Process

## 1.3.8.2.1

Customers will be notified of the impending termination of Lifeline benefits in a letter separate from the consumer's monthly bill.

## 1.3.8.2.2

The customer will have up to sixty (60) days from the date of the termination letter in which to demonstrate his or her continued eligibility before Lifeline support is discontinued.

## 1.3.8.2.3

A customer who appeals must present proof of continued eligibility consistent with the above Lifeline qualifications.

## 1.3.8.2.4

This ETC will terminate Lifeline services for subscribers who fail to demonstrate continued eligibility within the sixty (60) day time period.

## 1.3.9 RECORD RETENTION POLICY

## 1.3.9.1 General

## 1.3.9.1.1

The Federal Communications Commission has established specific record retention requirements for the Lifeline certification process. This ETC will have specific procedures to ensure its record retention policy complies with legal requirements.

1.3.9.2 This ETC, through its own recordkeeping or through the recordkeeping of the ALIVE Board and its third-party contractor on behalf of this ETC, shall maintain certification records for the period of time required by the Federal Communications Commission for all Lifeline participants.

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(AT) 1.3 LIFELINE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (continued)

1.3.9.3 This ETC shall retain certifications, signed by the subscriber, regarding the consumer's eligibility for Lifeline, including self-certifications, that income documentation accurately reflects the household income. This certification shall be retained at least as long as the consumer receives Lifeline service from this ETC or until this ETC is audited by the Administrator. This ETC shall maintain certifications for subscribers terminating Lifeline service for at least three (3) years after termination. Such records shall be maintained in compliance with all federal and Public Service Commission requirements and such records shall be provided to the Administrator or the Public Service Commission upon proper request.



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**2015 Progress Report**  
**For Madison County Telephone Company**  
**401709**

In its USF / ICC Transformation Order and subsequent Orders, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC " or "Commission") requires Eligible Telecommunications Carriers ("ETCs") to submit a five-year build-out plan in a manner consistent with Section 54.202(a)(1)(ii) for the Commission's Rules by July 1, 2014 and to submit annual progress reports thereafter. Section 54.202(a)(1)(ii) states in part that ETCs are to submit a five-year plan that describes with specificity proposed improvements or upgrades to the ETC's network throughout its proposed service area. Each ETC shall estimate the area and population that will be served as a result of the improvements.

In its March 5, 2013 Order, the FCC specified that for rate-of-return carriers, the five-year plans "should describe the carrier's network improvement plan, which should provide greater visibility into current plans to extend broadband service to unserved locations in rate-of-return service territories". Madison County Telephone Company ("MADCO") is a rate-of-return carrier ETC and submitted its five-year network improvement plan in the 2015 submission, which was filed in June 2014. MADCO now submits its first Progress report in this, 2016 submission.

This progress report will focus on the activities that have transpired to-date in funding year 2015 as well as activities which are planned to transpire during the remainder of 2015. As a point of reference and for historical purposes, MADCO will include the original 5-year plan filed in the 2015 Submission.

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### Estimated Federal Support for 2015 – (114)

Per the Universal Service Administration Corporation's (USAC) Third Quarter 2015 projected support, MADCO estimates their support funds in the following manner:



### Summary of 2015 Progress – (115), (116), (117)





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Explanation of network improvement targets not met – (118)



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Map detailing its progress toward meeting its plan targets – (113)



#### **HISTORICAL 5 YEAR PLAN SUBMITTED IN THE 2015 SUBMISSION**

##### **Five-Year network Improvement Plan**

##### **For Madison County Telephone Company, Inc.**

In its USF / ICC Transformation Order and subsequent Orders, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC " or "Commission") requires Eligible Telecommunications Carriers ("ETCs") to submit a five-year build-out plan in a manner consistent with Section 54.202(a)(1)(ii) for the Commission's Rules by July 1, 2014 and to submit annual progress reports thereafter. Section 54.202(a)(1)(ii) states in part that ETCs are to submit a five-year plan that describes with specificity proposed improvements or upgrades to the ETC's network throughout its proposed service area. Each ETC shall estimate the area and population that will be served as a result of the improvements.

In its March 5, 2013 Order, the FCC specified that for rate-of-return carriers, the five-year plans " should describe the carrier's network improvement plan, which should provide greater visibility into current plans to extend broadband service to unserved locations in rate-of-return service territories". Madison County

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Telephone Company, Inc. ("MCTC") is a rate-of-return carrier ETC and hereby submits its five-year network improvement plan.

**I. The Challenges Faced by the Company in Providing Voice and Broadband to its Rural Service Area**

**A. Description of the Company and its Service Area**



**B. The Exchanges Contained Within the Company's Study Area**



**II. The Company Has Used and Will Use Universal Service Support Only for the Intended Purpose**

Section 254(e) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended requires ETCs to use Universal Service Support ("USF") only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended. Pursuant to Section 54.314 of the FCC's rules, in order for state-designated ETCs to receive



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USF for the coming year, states must annually file certifications by October 1 stating that all federal high-cost support provided to such carriers within the state "was used in the preceding calendar year and will be used in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended." ETCs not designated by the state must file similar certifications with the FCC.

In its USF/ICC Transformation Order, the FCC clarified that prior to making the Section 254(e) certifications, states should conduct a "rigorous examination of the factual information" contained in the annual Section 54.313 reports, of which the

five year network improvement plan and annual progress reports are a part, in determining whether they can certify that carriers' support has been used and will be used only for the purpose for which the support was intended. The FCC said that it would also use the reports to verify certifications filed by ETCs that are not state-designated. In this context, the Commission stated, "in light of the public interest obligations we adopt in this Order, a key component of the Section 254(E) certification will now be that support is being used to maintain and extend modern networks capable of providing voice and broadband service.

Essentially, under the existing rules and processes, the federal USF received by the Company and other incumbent rural telephone companies are, in fact, an integral part of the recovery of expenditures of rural incumbent local exchange carriers incurred in the provision, maintenance and upgrading of their provision of facilities and services for which the USF is intended. Madison County Telephone Company, Inc. depends upon its receipt and utilization of federal universal service support to provide rural telephone customers with affordable and quality voice and broadband services.

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Accordingly, given the critical role the network improvement plan and the progress reports will have in the annual Section 254(e) certification process, Madison County Telephone Company, Inc.'s plan and progress reports will demonstrate not only how MCTC has used and will use USF not only for improvements and upgrades, but also for the provision and maintenance of the facilities and services to which the support was intended.

### **III. The Company's Five-Year Network Improvement Plan**

When the Commission adopted its five-year plan requirements for FCC designated ETCs in its 2005 ETC Order, it set forth the following criteria as to how the ETC is

to describe with "specificity" the proposed improvements or upgrades to the ETC's network throughout its service area:

(1) how signal quality, coverage, or capacity will improve due to the receipt of high-cost support throughout the area for which the ETC seeks designation; (2) the projected start date and completion date for each improvement and the estimated amount of investment for each project that is funded by high-cost support; (3) the specific geographic areas where the improvements will be made; and (4) the estimated population that will be served as a result of the improvements.

In that order, the FCC clarified that service quality improvements in the five-year plan "do not necessarily require additional construction of network facilities." Accordingly, the improvements listed in the plan may be projects related to the expansion of the network (one or multiple service), projects related to updating technology to accommodate new services or higher bandwidth or maintenance projects, such as to reduce trouble reports and replace outdated equipment. Additionally, in some cases, the projects may be ones that improve or upgrade

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the entire network rather than discrete areas within a study area or they may be ones that are ongoing projects that have no specific start and completion dates.

The instructions to the Form 481 state "recipients may describe where improvements are expected to occur by wire center or census block, as appropriate. To the extent no improvements are planned for specific areas, the five-year plan should so indicate." The instructions also require that in subsequent annual progress reports which must include the total amount of universal support received must provide this information "broken out separately by the amount spent on capital expenses and the amount spent on operating expenses."

Accordingly, the Company's five-year plan separately provides both capital expenditures and operating expenses.

#### **A. The Company's Major Network Improvement Projects**

Based upon this framework, Appendix A reflects Madison County Telephone Company, Inc.'s major network improvement projects for the five calendar years 2015 through 2019 along with the start and completion dates, capital cost, areas and population associated with those projects

#### **B. How These Projects Will Improve the Network**

Below is a detailed description of each project listed in the attached Part A.

Project 1 -





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[REDACTED]

Project 2 -

[REDACTED]

Project 3 -

[REDACTED]

Project 4 -

[REDACTED]

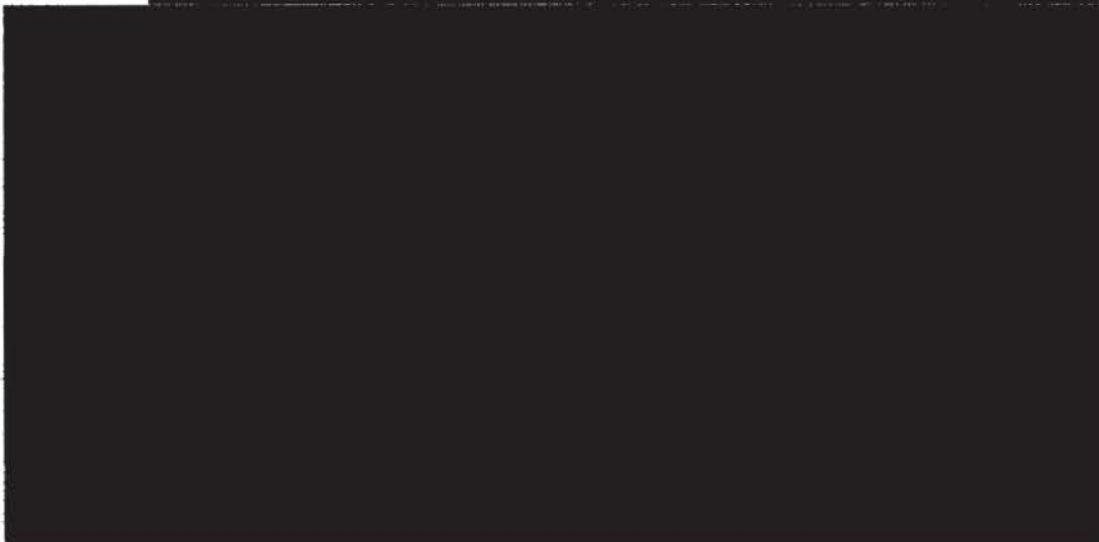
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Project 5 -



Project 6 -



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[REDACTED]

Project 7 -

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Project 8 -

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Project 9

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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[REDACTED]

Project 10

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Project 11

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Project 12

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Project 13



Project 14 -



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[REDACTED]

Project 15

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Project 16

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Project 17

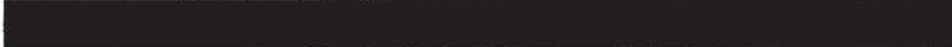
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Project 18





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**Attachment A**

**Madison County Telephone Company  
401709  
2015 Construction Status**



**Madison County Telephone Company, Inc.**

**Response to Lines 3010 – Milestone Certification**

Madison County Telephone Company, Inc. ("Company") hereby certifies that they have taken reasonable steps to provide upon reasonable request broadband service at actual speeds of 4 Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream, with latency suitable for real-time applications, including Voice over Internet Protocol, and usage capacity that is reasonable comparable to comparable offerings in urban areas, and that requests for such service are met within a reasonable amount of time as set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47, Part 54, Subpart C, §54.313(f)(1)(i).

**Madison County Telephone Company, Inc.**

**Response to Lines 3012 – Newly Served Anchor Institutions**

Madison County Telephone Company, Inc. ("Company") hereby certifies that they have had no new requests for broadband service from any community anchor institution during the preceding calendar year.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0572-0031. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 4 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

<b>USDA-RUS</b>  <b>OPERATING REPORT FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS BORROWERS</b>		<i>This data will be used by RUS to review your financial situation. Your response is required by 7 U.S.C. 901 et seq. and, subject to federal laws and regulations regarding confidential information, will be treated as confidential.</i> <b>BORROWER NAME</b>  Madison County Telephone Company, Incorporated	
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b> -Submit report to RUS within 30 days after close of the period. For detailed instructions, see RUS Bulletin 1744-2. Report in whole dollars only.		<b>PERIOD ENDING</b> December, 2014	<b>BORROWER DESIGNATION</b> AR0529
<b>CERTIFICATION</b>  We hereby certify that the entries in this report are in accordance with the accounts and other records of the system and reflect the status of the system to the best of our knowledge and belief. <b>ALL INSURANCE REQUIRED BY 7 CFR PART 1788, CHAPTER XVII, RUS, WAS IN FORCE DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD AND RENEWALS HAVE BEEN OBTAINED FOR ALL POLICIES.</b>  <b>DURING THE PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT PURSUANT TO PART 1788 OF 7CFR CHAPTER XVII</b> (Check one of the following)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All of the obligations under the RUS loan documents have been fulfilled in all material respects.		<input type="checkbox"/> There has been a default in the fulfillment of the obligations under the RUS loan documents. Said default(s) is/are specifically described in the Telecom Operating Report	
Tom Shrum		3/25/2015 DATE	

PART A. BALANCE SHEET					
ASSETS	BALANCE PRIOR YEAR	BALANCE END OF PERIOD	LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	BALANCE PRIOR YEAR	BALANCE END OF PERIOD
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
1. Cash and Equivalents			25. Accounts Payable		
2. Cash-RUS Construction Fund			26. Notes Payable		
3. Affiliates:			27. Advance Billings and Payments		
a. Telecom, Accounts Receivable			28. Customer Deposits		
b. Other Accounts Receivable			29. Current Mat. L/T Debt		
c. Notes Receivable			30. Current Mat. L/T Debt-Rur. Dev.		
4. Non-Affiliates:			31. Current Mat.-Capital Leases		
a. Telecom, Accounts Receivable			32. Income Taxes Accrued		
b. Other Accounts Receivable			33. Other Taxes Accrued		
c. Notes Receivable			34. Other Current Liabilities		
5. Interest and Dividends Receivable			35. Total Current Liabilities (25 thru 34)		
6. Material-Regulated			<b>LONG-TERM DEBT</b>		
7. Material-Nonregulated			36. Funded Debt-RUS Notes		
8. Prepayments			37. Funded Debt-RTB Notes		
9. Other Current Assets			38. Funded Debt-FFB Notes		
10. Total Current Assets (1 Thru 9)			39. Funded Debt-Other		
<b>NONCURRENT ASSETS</b>			40. Funded Debt-Rural Develop. Loan		
11. Investment in Affiliated Companies			41. Premium (Discount) on L/T Debt		
a. Rural Development			42. Reacquired Debt		
b. Nonrural Development			43. Obligations Under Capital Lease		
12. Other Investments			44. Adv. From Affiliated Companies		
a. Rural Development			45. Other Long-Term Debt		
b. Nonrural Development			46. Total Long-Term Debt (36 thru 45)		
13. Nonregulated Investments			<b>OTHER LIAB. &amp; DEF. CREDITS</b>		
14. Other Noncurrent Assets			47. Other Long-Term Liabilities		
15. Deferred Charges			48. Other Deferred Credits		
16. Jurisdictional Differences			49. Other Jurisdictional Differences		
17. Total Noncurrent Assets (11 thru 16)			50. Total Other Liabilities and Deferred Credits (47 thru 49)		
<b>PLANT, PROPERTY, AND EQUIPMENT</b>			<b>EQUITY</b>		
18. Telecom, Plant-in-Service			51. Cap. Stock Outstand. & Subscribed		
19. Property Held for Future Use			52. Additional Paid-in-Capital		
20. Plant Under Construction			53. Treasury Stock		
21. Plant Adj., Nonop. Plant & Goodwill			54. Membership and Cap. Certificates		
22. Less Accumulated Depreciation			55. Other Capital		
23. Net Plant (18 thru 21 less 22)			56. Patronage Capital Credits		
24. TOTAL ASSETS (10+17+23)			57. Retained Earnings or Margins		
			58. Total Equity (51 thru 57)		
			59. TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY (35+46+50+58)		

Total Equity = 42.00% % of Total Assets